THE PRAGMATICS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION IN A JAPANESE COLLEGE : A FOREIGN PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

Perhaps more than many other cultures, that of the Japanese is, to a great extent, orally exemplified and transmitted more through implicature than through either the form or content of the discourse itself. Implicature refers to what is implicit rather than explicit in human discourse. Oral communication between the Japanese, especially in educational settings, is based upon a deep and broadly shared recognition that the style and presentation of discourse are often more important to the proper conveyance of meaning in personal relationships than to the actual ideas being conveyed. To the Japanese, the mode and demeanor of the communication, together with its carefully chosen honorifics and nuances, often create more value and importance in terms of delivery effect than the structure and intent of the discourse's original content. The above communicative traits actually pervade all aspects of Japanese society, but they are, in my view, especially prevalent in the oral exchanges of educational personnel, both between individual faculty members themselves, as well as between faculty members and their administrative personnel.

The Communicative Challenge :

As an American professor of English who is also currently the Chair of his department in a small, private, two-year Japanese college, I have gained an interesting perspective over a two and half year period on how the linguistic field of pragmatics helps to explain the conveyance of meaning in oral discourse. Of particular value to a person in my position, is to examine how the foreign administra-

tor can apply the teachings of pragmatics toward improving his own understanding of the dynamics of the educational communications taking place, both between colleagues within his own academic department, as well as between faculty and management within the broader educational framework of the institution as a whole.

From the perspective of a foreign administrator, these challenges can bear heavily upon the degree of success with which participation in normal departmental and school-wide communications can be achieved. They also effect how clearly, effectively and with what degree of success the administrator's recommendations for procedural change and the implementation of new projects can be realized. With this setting in mind, it is the intent of this article to illustrate the application of three major pragmatic concepts which help to explain the nature of the communicative challenges an American academic with administrative responsibilities faces in a Japanese educational environment.

Pragmatics Defined :

Pragmatics is an area of linguistics that examines the relationship between what people mean within a particular context and how that context influences what is said (G. Yule : 1996 : 3). Pragmatics also studies how we communicate more than what we originally say and how speakers organize what they want to say in accordance with who they're talking to, where they are, when the speaking is taking place and under what circumstances it occurs (Ibid). Pragmatics is concerned with how meaning varies with context and how the interpretation of meaning is derived from one's experience in the world (G. Cook : 1989 : 30). Most significantly for this paper is to understand that pragmatics investigates how language reflects the speaker's understanding of his/her environment and the appropriate manner of communicating and learning within it. Based upon specific, culturally-learned codes of communicative conduct and subsequent behavior within a particular environment, a speaker's style of communication will vary to fit the communicative

obligations and customs required to function both appropriately and successfully within a specific communicative environment.

With the above basic understanding of pragmatics in mind, it is necessary to go one step further and to look at the relationship between discourse and action. All cultures have specific communicative styles or methods which help define how their members communicate a need for human action. The multi-purpose expression, よろしくおねがいいたします in Japanese, (basically translated as "I kindly ask for your help and consideration, now and in the future") implies both a present and potentially future request for favor, assumption of responsibility or cooperation. Similarly, the expression, "I certainly hope you don't forget me," expresses a strong desire that someone be remembered by others. Thus, a final definition of pragmatics is that it is the study of the understanding of intentional human action and the degree to which these human actions are reflected in coherent discourse (G. Green : 1989 : 7). We now turn to presenting three of the more practically useful pragmatic concepts and to showing how these concepts can help to anticipate the administrative challenges encountered by the foreign administrator in a Japanese college.

KEY PRAGMATIC CONCEPTS AND THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE APPLICATIONS

Coherence in Discourse is Based Upon A Mutually Shared Cultural Repertoire and Schemata of Experience

Neither communication nor learning can effectively or accurately occur without relevant and familiar reference points to which both speaker and listener can connect their thoughts and ideas. When speakers and listeners initiate discussions, it is assumed that both have enough background knowledge and understanding of the contextual framework to bring meaning to the discussion and to guide its continuation to some kind of purposeful conclusion. The speaker must know enough

about the capability of the listener to judge whether she will understand the topic. The speaker must also be able to present the topic in a manner that the listener will understand. To subsequently respond and/or comment appropriately, the listener must, likewise, be able to recognize the contextual parameters from which the speaker's words and information derive. Thus, if a Japanese from Tokyo (1a) and one from Osaka (1b) are discussing where to buy an electronic dictionary for the best price, the following statement would be mutually understood and coherent because each speaker has either experienced or heard that the districts mentioned by (1b) are both famous for the shopping and purchase of electronics. The significance of both locations derives from both speakers having a mutually familiar piece of socioeconomic information which has come from some source (books, magazines, friends, advertisements) within their shared culture.

{1}a. 電気辞書をかえたいのです。 (I'd like to buy an electronic dictionary)

{1}b. あ,そうですか。それでわ大阪の日本橋は東京の秋葉原ですよう。行きましょう! (Really? Well, Osaka's Nihonbashi is Tokyo's Akihabara. Let's go!)

The unifying factor in this communication and the source from which coherence and understanding in the discussion originate is the mutually communicative experience both speakers have attained from membership in the same socioeconomic culture. Thus, as Brown has succinctly put it, culture provides the unique mental constructs which promote, reinforce and maintain the cognitive and affective behavior and knowledge which are learned, acquired or shared by all the members of a specific society and which are, subsequently, transmitted to successive generations (H. Douglas Brown : 1992 : 74).

Administrative Application

This pragmatic concept helps to explain the challenges a foreign administrator faces as Chair of his college's English Department and what his Japanese col-

leagues, both inside and outside the department, expect of him in the broader educational society of his institution. The English Department consists of four faculty members of which I am the only non-Japanese. My colleagues all have superb commands of English, far superior to my command of Japanese. Therefore, at the start of every departmental meeting, I initially present agenda items in English in order to insure that I have accurately conveyed the substance of my related remarks, and that the parameters and points for the subsequent discussion I wish to pursue have been initially presented as I had intended in both form and content. After my initial presentation, my colleagues often prefer to discuss my agenda content in Japanese, irrespective of their excellent English. As my Japanese is not as fluent as my colleagues' English, I am often placed into the position of having to seek clarification of points I miss in their discussion. While my colleagues' discussion continues, I try to follow, making as many mental notes of each colleague's points, opinions and nuances as my comprehension will allow. Thus, for purposes of mutual linguistic security and coherence, we all depend upon our own linguistic schemata to help us present and discuss topics and to derive meaning from the resulting discourse. We have, in effect, chosen to communicate within the familiarity of our own inferential repertoires.

Pragmatics teaches that within any linguistic or cultural group, the emphasis on common familiarity and mutually-shared knowledge creates the coherence necessary for proper interpretation in the communicative process. Thus, within our departmental discussions, both my colleagues and I continuously strive to politely insure that we are all gaining as much as possible from a discussion of the agenda items through our own linguistic capabilities and based upon our own experiential backgrounds. We are reinforced in these desires through the use of our own languages to discuss the issues at hand. Each of us wants to insure him or herself that our related understandings and conclusions are accurately obtained by tying them, as pragmatics has identified, to the proper "schemata" by which we have

developed as communicative members of our own societies. A "schemata" is a preexisting body of knowledge developed through cultural training and transmission and held in memory as a reference point for future communicative use. As we are all serving within an educational institution, comments upon and discussion about educational issues are reflective of the degree to which we understand the college's institutional operations and procedures based upon relevantly acquired schemata. Here, the concept of preexisting schemata and experiential reference become of immense importance to the degree to which a foreign administrator can or can not be effective as a leader and as a contributor to new ideas and proposals. It's a very fragile and sometimes highly unstable position, and the results are frequently illusive.

This dual and multi-lingual communicative process originating within the department, often extends beyond the times and room in which the original departmental discussion occurs. Supplemental clarification on a one to one basis is not infrequently required. My colleagues, in turn, speak among themselves, sometimes coming to separate agreements and understandings which may subsequently be reported to me through further one to one discussions. Of even greater interest is the fact that regardless of our small size as a department, there are separate lines of communication between one colleague or another which, for a variety of reasons, tend at the least to confuse, and at the worst, to sometimes complicate and call into doubt my prior understanding of issues previously discussed. As the non-native head of the department, the path I sometimes walk between our separate schemata of culturally-based linguistic and experiential points of reference leads me toward questioning the extent to which I left a meeting fully apprised of the conclusions reached.

One pragmatic explanation for this extension of communication is for my Japanese colleagues in the department to insure that the points and ideas raised by their foreign Chair have been interpreted and settled in a manner comfortable and

familiar to the established operational schemata of their own experience and environment. The pragmatic emphasis on familiarity and knowledge as the basis for coherence in discourse allows members from the same cultural and linguistic background to easily consummate meaning related to issues with which they are familiar. The result of this understandable cultural foundation for and orientation to communication reduces one's inclination or even willingness to consider alternative ideas or approaches toward problems which have, heretofore, been handled in a manner more reflective of their own traditionally utilized experiential channels and procedures.

Least the reader misinterpret the foregoing comments as constituting value judgment or criticism, they are in no way so intended, nor are they meant to imply an existing disharmony or conflict in this administrator's departmental communications. Earlier, it was noted the mutual politeness with which we communicate based upon our own linguistic and experiential foundations, and this mutual respect does, in fact, pervade our communicative style as a department. Several extremely important and significant curricular projects have been successfully completed as the result of fine cooperative work derived from these segmental, one-to-one relations between departmental colleagues. In my view, the one-to-one communication between colleagues often serves as a kind "reality check" upon the degree to which the foreign Chair appears to be functioning in a manner consistent with established institutional realities and practices. To this extent, therefore, it is a gracious attempt by my colleagues to help the Chair attempt the realization of his objectives by insuring among themselves that his intentions move forward in a manner that does not reflect adversely upon the department's reputation and cooperative role in the eyes of others. It is also safe to say, however, that the extent to which this assistance is provided is commensurate with the degree and extent to which each of my colleagues feel personally comfortable in doing so within the expected socio-cultural behavioral standards of the institution to which they, of

course, wish to adhere.

The explanation of our departmental communicative style is illustrative of the application of the pragmatic concept that human discourse derives its security and cohesiveness through a mutually familiar linguistic, cultural and procedural background, especially as these relate to educational issues and procedures. However, for the foreign administrator who cannot always perform equally well in his colleagues' native language, it is fair to say that there exists the ever-present potential for communicative gaps, misunderstandings and resulting frustration. The degree of seriousness to which these potentialities occur depend upon the extent to which clarification and reconfirmation can be subsequently obtained.

The Concept of "Script" in Cross-cultural Pragmatics

The potential gap between the foreign administrator's perception of his colleagues' educational schemata and the realities of their experiential points of reference illustrate a second important pragmatic principle, one which bears upon an understanding and interpretation of the sequence in which events occur within the Japanese educational institution. A "script" can be defined as a preexisting knowledge base about the order in which actions occur in any event, and how these sequential actions can and should be interpreted. Of more specific importance to the foreign administrator is that because scripting refers to a pre-understanding among members of a culture as to the significance any set of sequential actions plays in a specific event, the details of these actions are also assumed to be mutually understood and are, therefore, unlikely to be directly or openly stated in direct discourse (Yule : Op.Cit : 87).

Administrative Application

In a small college, there is great emphasis upon defining the roles and responsibilities (役割分担 -*Yakuwari buntan*) of those who have been assigned to managing the conduct of events. Department Chairs are assigned a number of committee

membership responsibilities, many of which deal with extremely important issues central to the direction and governance of the institution. It is presumed, therefore, that committee members will state their opinions and that some type of consensus on the issues at hand will be achieved.

My Japanese colleagues, mutually familiar with the sequential significance of their responsibilities as previously illustrated by the pragmatic concept of communicative coherence through shared experiential tradition, by in large implement these contributory obligations with mutual understanding and smoothness. While the related discussions may contain conflicting opinions and varying points of view, they mainly pertain to methods of implementation. The broader significance of and rationale for the event, together with the actions necessary to its operational implementation, are pre-scripted, thereby assumed to be understood by the committee members. These pre-scripted behavioral mind-sets automatically become the ideational foundation for the conduct of the event's supporting actions. The educational institution as a whole then simply applies the scripted behaviors to the implementation of the event within its own goals and objectives. Thus, both organizing committee and the entire institution undertake an event on the same organizational basis and procedural understanding.

Within the broader educational environment of the whole college, my colleagues' assumption of shared, unstated scripts communicates a sense of duty and purpose difficult for the sincere and well-intended but less culturally scripted foreign administrator to emulate. While gaps in procedural understanding are, as described earlier, often supplemented by generous doses of clarification and help from departmental colleagues, this does not reduce the administrator's stress nor the sense of inadequacy resulting from yet incomplete familiarity with shared schemata of experience and understanding of the proper behavior and actions to take in a particular educational event. While this unfamiliarity has decreased over time, the complexity and interwoven nature of cultural scripts require a substantial

amount of commitment, perseverance and patience to understand. The amount of time necessary to achieving this understanding will, of course, vary with the individual's level of experience. Nonetheless, the need to invest heavily in time and effort should not be underestimated.

A simple example of how this pragmatic concept is illustrated by an experience of being suddenly called to an interview of a student who wished to transfer to a four year institution following graduation from our college. As Chair of the student's department, it was my responsibility to review his rationale for transfer. As part of this review, I was to comment upon the likelihood that our college would recommend his transfer to the receiving institution, and to point out any actual or potential weaknesses in the student's current academic record which may constitute grounds for withholding transfer recommendation. A separate committee at the college exists specifically to deal with student transfer matters. However, as administrative representative of the student's department, it was my assumed task to comment on the issues just enumerated. Without advance notice, the head of this committee appeared at my door one morning requesting my immediate participation.

I had no previous experience with this event or its intended purpose. Nonetheless, to maintain the standards for outward appearance and preserve the semblance of appropriate action attributed to this activity, it was important for the Chair of the student's department to be present, regardless of whether he did or did not have anything appropriately specific to say. It would be satisfactory, said the committee Chair, that my participation was merely proforma rather than substantive.

Hearing a very brief outline of the upcoming procedure while walking down the stairs to the meeting room, it did not appear to be important that with proper pre-understanding, I would have been very willing to contribute more relevant and helpful remarks to the student during the interview. The pre-scripted codes for the actions appropriate to these types of student interviews, as well as those that de-

partment heads are assumed to take with respect to them, went unsaid in my case, and it is too easy to simply attribute this situation to a lack of advance notice for an administrator who may not have been familiar with the action sequence. The committee had already reviewed the student's record, knew quite a lot about him, and proceeded to seek his self-assessment of the degree to which he felt qualified and adequately prepared for the transfer. As Chair of his department, I sat at the head of the table, nodding appropriately as related comments in response to the student's responses were made by various members of the committee.

There is a more relevant and interesting explanation for why, as department Chair, I may not have been adequately briefed. Pragmatics teaches that in pre-scripting, there is much in our communications that is left unsaid because it is assumed by members of the same cultural community to be already known. Similarly, the appropriate course of action and the relevant customary discourse required to accompany the actions of specific events are also, through pre-scripted knowledge, assumed to be already understood.

Some years ago, the noted anthropologist, Edward Hall, made a distinction between the communicative styles in what he called "high context" and "low context" cultures. High context cultures are those in which more is assumed than what is actually said, more is expected than actually explained. Referring to the high context Japanese culture, Hall noted the rarity with which someone will correct another or voluntarily offer detailed explanations. One is supposed to know. Those raised in high context cultures expect more of others than is the case in lower context cultures which value questioning, prompting and detailed explanation (E. Hall : 1976 : 112). Expanding further on the parameters of action in Japanese society, Donald Richie commented that for the Japanese, the conduct of all action is governed by set patterns and models. Formal behavioral absolutes exist and are aspired to in virtually all aspects of Japanese society. The proper conduct of action becomes an exercise in the "art of behavior" in which the form of the

action may be as important as its content (D. Richie : 1992 : 18). To support the proper format of the student's transfer interview, it was important for his Chair to be present - less important what was said by the Chair as long as what was minimumly required to be said was conveyed by the committee as a whole.

While it is true that Japanese faculty, who are themselves, constantly reassigned on a yearly basis to different committee responsibilities, need time to adjust to their newly scripted roles, they are, nonetheless, by social training, familiar with the often unstated components of duty and the sequential acts which tie duty to performance as defined by Japanese educational practice. Thus, whatever the content of the responsibility, the general way in which to conduct oneself in implementing or performing actions required by this responsibility has been culturally transmitted and/or learned during the process of attaining Japanese adulthood.

In the case of the student interview, I first gleaned as much as possible from the opening remarks of the committee Chair to the student as to why the interview was being conducted. This served as my only substantive introduction (besides the stairway walk) as to the reason why I was present. The committee wanted to inform the student that in order to obtain the school's recommendation for his transfer, his grades and attendance had to be substantially improved. Furthermore, since the student was actually considering transferring to a law major, the committee wanted to now know how his current concentration in English studies would serve him in his new, seemingly unrelated academic field. Suffice it to relate that since this foreign administrator knew the student well, a seconding of the committee Chair's comments initially satisfied the role of a departmental Chair as a representative of final authority on the role of this committee in a transfer interview situation. This was followed by a further independent suggestion to the student that he start becoming familiar with more legal material in English. This comment tied both my administratively supportive role in the committee to another pre-scripted pattern of student-teacher relations in Japan, that of the student's personal coun-

selor and advisor. My appropriate role script was, thus, finally enacted success-
fully to conclusion without any further direct explanation to me ever having taken
place.

The Cooperative Principle

The final pragmatic concept that I would like to present is one which helps us
understand the overall structure and progression of any discourse in any culture as
assumed by the participants . I say "assumed" because the meanings, both implicit
and explicit, that are derived from an orderly presentation of any topic and "as-
sumed" to be understood by the native speakers of any particular culture, may not
be properly followed nor completely understood by the non-native speaking for-
eign administrator. The term, "cooperative principle" was coined by Paul Grice in
1975. As I shall describe shortly, Grice's concept can be communicatively applied
in conjunction with a major concept of Japanese social structure that permeates the
educational environment, and one which can be difficult for the foreign adminis-
trator to consistently identify and comprehend accurately. But first, what is the es-
sence of Grice's notion. It is best described in his own words :

> Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of discon-
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> nected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are charac-
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> teristically. . . cooperative efforts ; and each participant recognizes in the
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> m, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a m
>
> utually accepted direction. This purpose may be fixed from the start. . .
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> or it may evolve during the exchange ; it may be fairly definite, or it ma
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> y be so indefinite as to leave very considerable latitude to the participant
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> s (as in a casual conversation). . . We might then formulate a rough gen-
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> eral principle which participants will be expected. . .to observe, namely :
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> Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at
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> which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk ex-

change in which you are engaged. (H.P.Grice : 1975 : 45).

Grice is obviously suggesting that, with some exceptions, people involved in a conversation will generally cooperate with each other throughout the duration of the discourse in order to arrive at some mutual understanding. In order to explain how this is normally done effectively, Grice has further clarified what communicative components are involved as conversants speak to one another. These are often transparent to the participants as they communicate. However, as we have learned from our earlier discussion of shared cultural, experiential schemata and pre-knowledge scripting, members of the same cultural group have usually already acquired the appropriate forms of conversational behavior by virtue of their mutual cultural upbringing and training. What are these components?

First, is the component of "quantity" in which Grice suggests that during discourse, conversants share as much, but not more, information as is necessary for purposes of the exchange. Readers may be familiar with the Japanese concepts of *tatemae* and *honne*, in which a speaker makes careful distinctions between what is said up front (*tatemae*) versus what is kept to oneself (*honne*). As will be shown shortly, the application of this distinction to the discourse appropriate in any given group meeting, can be difficult for the foreign administrator who has been trained to be "open" and relatively unguarded in his comments.

Second, is the component of "quality" in which both conversants' contributions to the discourse are those that are true and accurate rather than false, incorrect or misleading. Thus, in order to cultivate a sense of trust between people, the information that is exchanged should be genuine, void of known inaccuracies or filled with information that may later reflect upon either of the speakers in a harmful or derogatory manner. In terms of establishing close, human relationships prior to imposing upon those relationships for favor or privilege, or for suggesting changes in the other's approach toward, for example, teaching methodologies or materials,

readers who understand the broader Japanese concept of *amae* will find the pragmatic component of "quality" applicable to the conduct of communicative behavior within the Japanese educational institution. *Amae* is one of the most enduring foundations of interpersonal relationships in Japan. The term originally derives from the close parental-child relationship, but developed broadly in Japanese society as a major concept underlying the establishment and maintenance of loyal, caring and trustworthy treatment between people, even with those with whom one disagrees.

The third component of the cooperative principle is that of "relevance." The fact that when we speak, we need to convey relevance to the listener seems simple enough. But, in another culture, especially when operating in another language, what is relevant to the non-native speaker may not be to the native listener and visa versa, especially if there is an incomplete understanding or, more seriously, an unacceptance of what is or isn't relevant to the topic or issue being discussed.

The fourth and last component of Grice's model is that of "manner." This deals with the communicative preference for brevity, the attempt to be as clear as possible in one's expression of ideas and to exhibit a sense of order and progressive flow in one's conversations. Earlier, we mentioned Richie's observation on the Japanese proclivity for patterns and models, and here, we can provide relevant linguistic illustration of a common communicative model in Japanese educational communication - that of the organizational structure of a typical faculty meeting. Almost without variation and with brevity and clarity, a faculty meeting usually begins with its opening by a President, Principal or Committee Chair who formally announces that the 32nd meeting of the General Faculty "will now open," and apologizes for holding this meeting "at such a busy time in your daily schedules," In fact, most people come, busy or not, because the organization's events are often considered of greater priority than one's personal schedule, and to be absent would, therefore, be considered improper. A special person is designated to

report attendance, together with brief reasons for why someone is absent. The agenda is entered, reports from sub-committees are heard in order. Nearly without variation, the reporter opens with "I will report on . . .," and proceeds to state the nature of the subject. He then makes the report and almost without exception, ends with *ijyo desu*, a term meaning "over, that's all ; I've finished." Comments are invited by the presiding Chair at the conclusion of each report. If there has been a request for faculty participation or responsibility, the reporter will politely ask for everyone's cooperation with the familiar *yoroshiku onegai itashimasu*. In my experience, this procedure is rarely altered. This normal framework for group communication does not mean discussions cannot become extremely long, due to the Japanese penchant for achieving consensus on almost all issues. "Manner" is, indeed, highly established in the organizational structure of the proceedings, and the foreign administrator, who may be used to a more informal method of group interaction, will certainly need to make adjustments to fit the nature of the Japanese meeting system.

Administrative Application

Grice's Cooperative Principle suggests the existence of a linguistic hierarchy of mutually assumed and practiced communicative devices common to all discourse. For a foreign administrator in Japanese higher education, this pragmatic concept provides another important window into a better understanding of the discourse and related behavior of colleagues in the educational environment, one which is also hierarchical in nature.

In one of the most definitive works on the subject of social hierarchy, Japanese sociologist Chie Nakane pointed out the intimately interwoven nature of language and behavior in her society (C. Nakane : 70 : 30). She refers to the ranking system or *tate shakai* ("vertical society") of Japan in which the traditional essence of society has always been a clear cut delineation between all individuals based on their social class, institutional status, sex and age. As De Mente describes

Nakane's concept, everything in traditional Japanese society flowed from "the mandatory observance of one's position in society - the use of language, etiquette, dress, education, occupation . . ." (B.L. De Mente : 1997 : 1).

Earlier, we referred to the terms, *tatemae* and *honne*, with respect to the variations in the importance of what one chooses to express or not express. Expanding on this concept with specific respect to the educational environment, Nakane points out that the frequency with which one of lower rank (*kouhai*) offers an opinion, together with the content of and degree to which such opinion opposes or contradicts a superior's (*sempai*) thoughts, are of primary importance to the maintenance of the *tate shakai*. One is expected always to be ready with differentiated, delicate degrees of honorific expressions appropriate to the rank order between one's self and the person addressed (Op. Cit : 34-35). One of lesser rank needs to be careful not to over extend remarks or opinions which might embarrass a superior in front of others.

Recently, in a meeting between college faculty representatives and the institution's Board of Governors, a proposal as to the exact hours when the faculty should be present in their offices was raised. A Japanese professor, opposed to this set time schedule, elegantly and politely pointed out to the elderly board members in attendance a variety of reasons why such a schedule was inadvisable given the nature of educational research. He explained that such research often required one to be at societal meetings, libraries and other locations, and that writing was often better accomplished away from the distractions of one's college office.

The quantity of the professor's explanation was succinct and to the point. He was not over-instructive in describing the nature of educational research, and he did so without linking his comments to his deeper, personal thoughts or opinions of the matter. The quality and relevance of his explanations as to what educational research entails were factual. His examples as to why having to be on campus between preset times would make the normal components of the research process

difficult to pursue constituted an accurate statement of the freedom necessary for implementing normal research procedure. His presentation was, above all, made in a _manner_ which used language that was to the point, polite, low key and, again, free of any specific language critical of the issue's source. As a full professor, he held the highest academic rank within the institution, but he was speaking to administrative superiors older than he. Even though these board members were not professors, they occupied, in both age and authority, a higher rank than he. Therefore, his comments were directed, not on the basis of his own superiority in terms of competence in the normal research procedure of his profession, but rather from the basis of a specific behavioral standard requiring an equally specific style of discourse appropriate to the vertical, hierarchical structure of the occasion.

This foreign administrator was also a participant. As the issue of time schedules was being presented, my own culturally-based schemata of academic tradition kept interrupting my trend of thought as I listened to the rationale for the proposal which was being explained as a necessary decision in order to bring academic schedules more in line with the time schedules and requirements of college office staff. A variety of arguments supporting this proposal was advanced. To the western academic, nothing is more fundamental to the issue of academic freedom than the ability of the professor to produce research of benefit to his field, students and to one's own academic reputation in the most advantageous method possible and upon one's own time schedule outside of established teaching and other committee meetings and responsibilities.

Nakane points out that "at a group meeting, a member should put forward an opinion in terms that are safe and advantageous to himself, rather than state a judgment in objective terms appropriate to the point at issue." Following permission to speak, my comments against the proposal, by comparison with my earlier colleague, sounded crude and critical. While I, too, occupied a professorial status, my level of Japanese seemed to produce both style and content that contradicted

much of both Grice's principle as well as the hierarchical role of language in the *tate shakai*. While initially expressing agreement with my earlier spoken colleague, I then expressed the idea that a tying of professors to time schedules was an old idea that disappeared 200 years ago in western educational practice, and one that was contrary to the role of the academic in any reputable educational institution. I expressed great personal surprise at the proposal. I indicated that such a proposal "captured" rather than encouraged free research, ignoring the issue of group equality and oneness of purpose that was being presented which is so basic to Japanese social dynamics, especially in a small, private educational institution. In the course of my discourse, I also obviated the distinction between *tatemae* and *honne*, the vertical ranking structure of the meeting, and allowed my American pre-scripted antithesis to perceived restraints on academic freedom to dominate both the delivery style and content of my discourse. The good model of my colleague, who also opposed the proposal, but expressed his concerns within the framework of accepted honorifics and appropriate linguistic demeanor, seemed to have been overshadowed by my natural inclination to state my views openly without much regard to the effect they might have. In these regards, too, my comments rarely followed the cooperative nature of Grice's principle which emphasizes discourse appropriate to the situation. As is often the case between Japanese and non-Japanese interaction, my remarks were no doubt seen (or possibly excused) in light of my foreignness, even though, for the time I have been here, I should have known better. Several responses were quietly given to the effect that I might want to reconsider my remarks in light of the proposal's objectives for equality and harmony of working hours between office and teaching personnel, and that the proposal had not intended to "imprison" the teaching faculty. The point being made here is the foreign administrator in Japan needs to be constantly aware of the interrelationship between discourse and behavior and be constantly aware of the effect a lack of concern for such matters may create in terms of the success to which one's sug-

gestions may be accepted by his educational colleagues. Objectivity and openness of expression are becoming more popular in Japan, but are still, by no means, the accepted norm.

CONCLUSION

The Japanese psychiatrist, Takeo Doi, has stated that the typical psychology of a given nation can be learned only through familiarity with its native language. Moreover, he observed long ago that a nation's language comprises everything which is intrinsic to its soul (T.Doi : 73 : 15). Reflecting upon Doi's observation, this article has attempted to introduce three concepts of pragmatics as a window through which the foreign administrator can observe the discourse patterns of his Japanese colleagues in an educational organization. The concepts discussed are not exclusive to education. They permeate all areas of society and its organizations. However, it is from within the educational environment of a small college that this administrator has been fortunate enough to directly observe them in action.

Pragmatics concerns not only what one says. It also helps to explain how things are said and when they are said and, most importantly, what is not said. A mutually shared repertoire and schemata of experience is the basic foundation upon which all discourse originates. This foundation is derived from mutually exclusive cultural upbringing and the application of what is familiar and accepted to oral discourse. All members of any culture base their coherence in communication upon a preexisting body of knowledge developed through cultural training and transmission. In discourse, this body of knowledge is drawn upon to insure mutual understanding between speaker and listener. In the discourse between two individuals, it is often what is assumed that carries more meaning that what is actually said.

Pragmatics teaches that these assumptions are carried by culture, and that the sharing of ideas and thoughts are derived from two speakers being able to share

cultural assumptions as to what is and isn't applicable to the coherent flow of their discourse. A mutually shared repertoire and schemata of experience always produces a behavioral manifestation, and the linguistic dynamics associated with behavior are also based upon mutually acquired experience. The foreign administrator needs to take a great deal of time to become as familiar as possible with both this repertoire and its related experience. Without this time and effort, the sincere desire to use appropriate discourse and related behavior in the conduct of his educational duties may be continuously confused, frustrated and elusive.

We have looked at how mutual repertoire and schemata of experience leads to a second pragmatic concept, that of the role of "script" in discourse where the actions occurring in any event are also pre-understood among members of a culture as to their significance in the conduct of any specific event. The fact that these understandings are unlikely to be directly or openly explained in direct discourse creates communicative gaps for a foreign administrator in attempting to understand the processes inherent in Japanese educational affairs and procedures. More importantly is the fact that the foreign administrator needs to understand that much of what he/she learns about Japanese sequential educational behavior will come from self-observation, trial and error and repetition, not from deliberately initiated orientations or constant explanation voluntarily offered by Japanese colleagues. While situations and locations may vary, one's colleagues will always try to be generally helpful and informative. However, the burden for seeking this assistance will generally fall upon the foreign administrator to initiate. This is not necessarily because of any intentional unfriendliness or unwillingness on the part of Japanese colleagues to provide. Rather it is, in this administrator's experience, simply not a custom for Japanese on traditional procedural matters to take the initiative in presuming upon another for what is not known about them.

Finally, we have discussed the Cooperative Principle in discourse which I have suggested is quite relevant to Nakane's concepts of hierarchical discourse as an

important linguistic component associated with the vertically ranking structure of Japanese society. "Quantity," "quality," "relevance" and "manner" all find meaning in the role of discourse in the Japanese educational environment in which the style of expression, or even lack of response, often carries more meaning than the actual content. The foreign administrator interested in change should approach a position in Japanese education with a cautious realization that any ·new ideas will take a long time to develop. In Japanese educational discourse, logic and objectivity run second to consensus, and there are specific terms, scripts, repertoires and behaviors in Japanese culture which express and consolidate these views. For the foreign administrator interested in supporting innovation, it is important to understand that sometimes what is said, written or submitted in these regards may get lost within the pre-scripted intentions of those whose support is needed for implementation. The reality of non-communication or lack of response to ideas is part of the *tatemae/honne* characteristic of Japanese discourse. It is also to be found represented in some or all of the four components of the Cooperative Principle.

There is a Japanese expression, *ishi bashi wo tataku*, which roughly translates as "the blind walk carefully." It represents a position of non-committment. As a pragmatic representation of this position, it also illustrates the tendency for Japanese to speak in ambiguous terms in order to avoid taking definite positions on important issues until a consensus can emerge from whatever group or groups finally take responsibility for resolving them (De Mente : Op.Cit : 145). The purpose of this article has been to show how a consideration of pragmatic concepts can help the foreign administrator, privileged to have been a part of the Japanese educational environment, to develop linguistic explanations through which ambiguity, as a feature of Japanese' discourse, can be explained and identified in light of its cultural origins. Developing this understanding will not only help the foreign administrator to better anticipate and follow the context and sequence of discourse and its related behavioral sequences. It will also provide the linguistic and cultural

framework to better understand and predict the culturally patterned, pre-scripted communication channels of the educational *tate shakai* through which his ideas or proposal will surely pass. This will also help reduce the substantial challenges facing the foreign administrator in trying to more knowledgeably affect desired outcomes and responses in accordance with the pragmatics of Japanese communicative patterns and traditions.

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